

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

April 28, 2022

Honorable David Price, Chair
Subcommittee on Transportation and
and Urban Development
Committee on Appropriations
2108 Rayburn House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation and Housing
Housing and Urban Development
Committee on Appropriations
404 Cannon House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Price and Ranking Member Diaz-Balart:

I am requesting funding for the Propel Center the Historic West Hunter Street Baptist Church Project in fiscal year 2023. The entity to receive funding for this project is Ralph David Abernathy III Foundation, Inc., located at 2785 Engle Road, NW, Atlanta, GA 30318. The project location is at 775 Martin Luther King, Jr, Drive, Atlanta, GA 30314.

This project will restore the church home of Dr. Ralph David Abernathy during key years of the Civil Rights Movement into an active space for honoring his legacy and the legacy of others in the movement and to educate people about civil rights. Specifically, it will furnish the sanctuary and offices as they were when Dr. Abernathy preached there. Additionally, on land that was donated to the foundation on the west side of the church, which is currently a separate parcel of empty grassland that hosts nothing more than an air conditioning unit, a plaza will be designed and constructed to create a neighboring place to visit when the actual historic site, the church, is not open.

This project is a good use of taxpayer dollars because this is an economic development project. As the first such project in the area, it will foster cultural tourism to inspire more investment and restoration in a historic area. So much of the Civil Rights Movement is still not known to much of America's population. The west side of Atlanta tells the story of Freedom in America, yet most of the buildings that could tell this story are empty, crumbling, and dangerous. This project will bring more people from around the country and world into the area, and in addition to its economic benefits, it will make the West Hunter Baptist Church and adjacent property a beacon for honoring history in the community.

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has any financial interest in this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nikema Williams", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nikema Williams
Member of Congress